

Council on the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

MINUTES

MARCH 21,
2013

10:00AM – 4:00PM

1 WEST WILSON, MADISON

MEETING CALLED BY	Billy Mauldin
PRESENT	Gary Ebben, Nicole Everson, Mary Jane Griffin, Tracy Haas, Denise Johnson, Billy Mauldin, Steve Smart
ODHH STAFF PRESENT	Linda Huffer, Melani Kaplan, Shawnee Thomas
ABSENT	Alex Slappey, Justin Vollmar
INTERPRETERS	Amber Mullet, Debra Gorra Barash
CAPTIONIST	Margo Lucas

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Billy Mauldin, Chair.

Agenda topics

COUNCIL MEMBERS INTRODUCTION & APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

DISCUSSION		
Nicole Everson – New Council Member (Deaf-Blind) introduced herself. Has a hearing loss and declining vision. Joined the Council to offer her perspective based on her experiences living with hearing and vision losses.		
Denise Johnson – New Council Member (Deaf) introduced herself. She works as the Project Coordinator for Alcohol and Drug Abuse for people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind.		
Approval of Meeting Minutes: There will be a change to the final meeting minutes from the December meeting. Amy Simonsen was one of the interpreters for the meeting, not Maria Kielma.		
Steve Smart motioned that the December meeting minutes are approved with the change. Gary Ebben seconded. Motion passed unanimously.		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
None		

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

DISCUSSION	
Office Updates – The central office for ODHH has moved from Room 450 to Room 558 at the DHS Building, 1 West Wilson Street, Madison.	
Logo & Brochure – ODHH now has a new logo and a new brochure.	

Deaf History Month Celebration –

- ODHH hosted an Open House in the central office in Madison. The event was considered a success with an estimated 80 to 100 people attending from within the Department of Health and the community.
- The Art Display in the DHS Building in Madison is still on display. Press about the display has been very successful. Melani Kaplan will be interviewed on March 28th on WKOW's morning news show about the program.
- Melani Kaplan will be presenting each week during Deaf History Month to DHS employees during an optional Lunch & Learn program, talking about Deaf Culture, history and communication tips. The goal of the programs will be to give department employees a better understanding of the cultural nuances of people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

WESP Conference – ODHH had a large staff presence during the recent annual WESP Conference in Appleton. Melani Kaplan and Carolyn Small were presenters. Amber Mullett and Chantel Young were loaned to the conference to join the interpreting team in collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction.

Department of Health Administration Changes – Kitty Rhodes is the new Secretary-Elect for DHS. Kevin Moore is now the Deputy Secretary. The Division Administrator for DLTC has resigned.

Website – The ODHH website saw its first V-log posted, talking about the ODHH Open House and Art Display. Efforts to make the website more user-friendly and culturally appropriate are ongoing. Each week during Deaf History Month, a feature of a successful person with a hearing loss will be posted.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Inmates and the Department of Corrections – Bette Mentz Powell has been working with some success with the Department of Corrections on improving equal communication access for inmates who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Wisconsin Interpreting and Transliterating Assessment (WITA) – The WITA testing process has been revamped and testing sessions have begun. The new process is aimed at providing more equal and balanced feedback for test-takers. Those who pass the WITA become eligible to get a temporary interpreting license through DSPS (Department of Safety & Professional Services).

Mental Health & Substance Abuse Steering Committee Update – (Linda Huffer asked Melani Kaplan to talk about this subject.) A new workgroup was created for the committee to focus on website development for the Committee to better communicate its mission and work. The Committee will also be exploring a project to collect anecdotal stories from members of the community about their experiences with the mental health system. Members of the Committee will also be attending the ADARA Conference in Minnesota in May.

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION

License Plate – Those interested in developing a Specialty License Plate have the option for selecting a specialty plate with funds supporting a specific charity or cause. Melani Kaplan has contacted the DOT to see if it is possible to have a specialty plate and is still waiting to hear back from them. One possible use for the funds raised from a specialty plate is a Visor Card. A sample visor card from Kentucky was shared with the Council with a positive response. There are currently three separate issues related to this topic: 1) Does the Council want a specialty license plate, 2) If the Council decides to do the specialty plate, what design would they want, 3) Does the Council want to do a Visor Card? Once a response is received on the two action items, the Council will then determine if these will become official Council projects. Billy Mauldin will be the lead on the Visor Card project if it comes to pass.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
License Plate: get response from DOT on the steps required to designate a specialty license plate. Communicate response with Council via email	Melani Kaplan	5/9
Visor Card: check with state police departments to see if they would endorse such an item.	Melani Kaplan	5/9

Deaf Child Bill of Rights – Tabled until Justin Vollmar can attend

Disaster Preparedness – Tom Benziger continues to represent ODHH during FAST meetings for emergency shelter response. He is also working on developing project goals and Vlogs for the website. Billy Mauldin – a helpful tip in the event of a tornado or severe storm, wear a helmet (bike, motorcycle, snowmobiling helmet) when hiding in the closet, basement or under the table. The helmet may help prevent head injury.

Webcasting Council Meetings – Unanimously decided by Council that this item be tabled until a further need arises by a Council member.

Legal Liaison Position – This is about the formation of a new position that would serve as an equal communication access liaison for people who are deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind and the legal system. The position would work with the courts and attorneys to ensure that equal access is provided from the beginning of any interactions with the courts all the way to ensuring that court-ordered actions are accessible as well. Motion made by Nicole Everson and seconded by Tracy Haas that the Council pursue exploring the Legal Liaison Position. Motion passed unanimously. Motion made by Denise Johnson and seconded by Nicole Everson that the Council create a subcommittee to work on the Legal Liaison Position. Council members on this subcommittee will include Denise Johnson, Steve Smart, Nicole Everson, Billy Mauldin and ODHH staff person Linda Huffer. Melani Kaplan

will provide support to this subcommittee as needed. Billy Mauldin will be the lead of the subcommittee. Support will be needed for this effort from the Wisconsin Association for the Deaf, Hearing Loss Association of America and the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind communities. Melani Kaplan will finish some rough budgeting for the position and share that with the subcommittee members to include in their materials as they move forward.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Share a finished rough estimated budget for the position with the subcommittee members	Melani Kaplan	4/26
Subcommittee members communicate via email about plan of action and next steps	Billy Mauldin, Nicole Everson, Steve Smart, Denise Johnson, Linda Huffer	5/9

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION

Council Website – With the recent changes to the Council website, members would like to use the website to better reach out to the community. Options were discussed to include an electronic brochure about the Council, announcements about community events and actions. While the Council doesn't have a staff to monitor an open comments section on the website, a section of the site could invite visitors to submit an email response to the question: "Is there a specific program or project you would like the Council to consider?" It would include a note to those submitting a comment that they should not expect a response. Before this change is deployed for public view, Melanie Kaplan will submit a draft of the page with the comment invitation to the members for approval.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Create draft of website with the comment section and share with members for their approval	Melani Kaplan	5/3

DSPS Website & Interpreter Licensure – The DSPS website that oversees the Interpreter Licensure is currently difficult to navigate and not deaf-friendly, per complaints from the community. Motion proposed by Gary Ebben that the Council compose a letter to DSPS asking that they make the interpreter licensure section of their website easier to access and more deaf friendly. Denise Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Motion proposed by Steve Smart that the letter to DSPS is shared with SLIC, WisRID, WAD and posted on the Council website for them to follow suit. Billy Mauldin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Create draft of letter to DSPS asking them to improve navigability and equal communication accessibility to the Interpreter Licensure section of their website, including ASL Vlogs	Melani Kaplan and Billy Mauldin	ASAP
Send copy of the letter to DSPS to SLIC, WisRID, WAD, asking them to do the same if they agree that this is an issue	Billy Mauldin	Upon Submission of the letter
Add letter to Council website with a note to the community	Melani Kaplan	Upon Submission of the letter

Video Remote Interpreting – Hiring entities and businesses are using Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) as a way to circumvent the state interpreter licensure. By using VRI interpreters from out of state, those interpreters may not meet the minimum standards set forth by state law. Motion made by Steve Smart that the Council writes a letter to DSPS in support of the state law that interpreters providing VRI services meet the same licensure requirements or equivalent as those who are physically within the state of Wisconsin. Motion seconded by Tracy Haas. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Create draft of letter to DSPS in support of the state law that interpreters providing VRI services meet the same licensure requirements or equivalent of those who are physically within the state of Wisconsin.	Steve Smart and Melani Kaplan	ASAP

WAD's Community Wellness Committee – Denise Johnson reports that this committee will be working in parallel to the Mental Health & Substance Abuse Steering Committee. In addition to focusing on mental health and substance abuse, they will be working on domestic violence, health hospice and educating the deaf and hard of hearing communities on these issues.

DVR – Following recent systematic changes within DVR, there has been an increase in complaints and concerns regarding appropriate services from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities. Motion made by Steve Smart that an invitation is extended to DVR to attend the next Council meeting to provide an overview of their current approach to providing services and give them some questions and sample situation of what the Council is hearing from the community. Motion seconded by Nicole Everson. Motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Council members email questions to Nicole Everson and Linda Huffer	ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS	ASAP

Invite representative from DVR to attend next meeting	Linda Huffer	Once some questions have been submitted so that Linda can include them with the invitation
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HLAA – Mary Jane Griffin reports that HLAA would like support from the Council on their Hearing Loop initiative. They would like to see that audiologist do more explanations on the use of the T-switch in hearing aids.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Research model legislation from other states on requirements for Audiologists to communicate with their clients about using the T-switch in hearing aids.	Mary Jane Griffin	5/9/13

DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION

Priorities for the Council action items are as follows:

1. Legal Liaison Position
2. DSPS letters
3. Assemble questions for DVR representative
4. Visor Card
5. License Plate

Next Meetings – 2013 meetings: May 9th, September 19th, December 6th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISCUSSION

Wisconsin Association of the Deaf is hosting performances of Vagina Monologues in Milwaukee and Madison on April 5th and 6th. The shows are to raise funds for Deaf Unity, a nonprofit organization that works with women, children and men who are Deaf and victims of domestic violence or sexual assault.

The Walk4Hearing will be on June 8th in Milwaukee to raise funds for HLAA. Denise Johnson will be leading a team to participate.

Meeting adjourned at 2:50pm by Billy Mauldin, Chair.